

APPROVED
MINUTES
NORTHWEST PROGRESSO – FLAGLER HEIGHTS
REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
FORT LAUDERDALE
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
8th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
MAY 21, 2015 – 4:00 P.M.

Cumulative Attendance
May 2015 - April 2016

<u>Members Present</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Steve Lucas, Chair	P	1	0
Ella Phillips, Vice Chair	P	1	0
Jessie Adderley	A	0	1
Sonya Burrows	P	1	0
Ron Centamore	A	0	1
Alan Gabriel	P	1	0
Camille Hansen	P	1	0
Mickey Hinton	A	0	1
John Hooper	P	1	0
Dylan Lagi	P	1	0
Scott Strawbridge	P	1	0
John Wilkes (arr. 4:09)	P	1	0

Currently there are 12 appointed members to the Board, which means 7 would constitute a quorum.

It was noted that a quorum was present at the meeting.

Staff

Bob Wojcik, Planner III
Jenni Morejon, Director, Department of Sustainable Development
Al Battle, Deputy Director, Department of Sustainable Development
Thomasina Turner-Diggs, CRA Project Coordinator
Jeremy Earle, Deputy Director, Department of Sustainable Development
Lisa Edmondson, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communication to City Commission

None.

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

Chair Lucas called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

Chair Lucas introduced new member John Hooper at this time. Mr. Hooper is a real estate agent and a longtime resident of Fort Lauderdale. There are currently three remaining vacancies on the Board.

II. Approval of Minutes from April 22, 2015 Meeting

Motion made by Mr. Gabriel, seconded by Mr. Hooper, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

III. Presentation – ULI TAP Report

Chair Lucas introduced Carla Coleman and Ken Stapleton, who provided a PowerPoint presentation on the Urban Land Institute's (ULI's) recent Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) Report. The ULI's panelists are volunteers who are chosen for their expertise once a scope has been determined by the City. Mr. Stapleton, who served as Chair of the TAP, explained that the panel studied the Sistrunk Corridor from an economic development perspective.

The panel's observations identified several strengths such as the Sistrunk Corridor's proximity to transit-oriented development (TOD) opportunities, past investments in infrastructure along the corridor, creation of a shared vision for the neighborhood, site control, and a strong cultural heritage. They also pointed out challenges, including communication of the shared vision, negative safety perception, branding issues, and limited signs of vibrancy.

The TAP created a series of recommendations based on these observations:

- Better communication of the shared vision through professional facilitation;
- Improved understanding of market demand through market research;
- Use of image and branding to position the Sistrunk Corridor as a unique, vibrant, and walkable place, with an emphasis on perception of safety.

Mr. Stapleton continued that the TAP was also asked to look at the industrial district located the north of the corridor. The panel found this area to have great opportunity for prosperity, development, jobs, and vibrancy. He recommended reviewing the regulations and businesses in place for this district to determine how it can provide jobs and other economic opportunities.

Mr. Stapleton advised that the lack of access to capital on the Sistrunk Corridor will require a longer time frame to address. He suggested that the CRA convene a capital market summit, including banks and other forms of equity, tax credits, bonds, and other entities to discuss investment opportunities for the area. Housing is essential for the revitalization of the corridor. Mr. Stapleton asserted that mixed-income housing is

necessary in order to support economic and business development along the Sistrunk Corridor, as it can bring greater spending power to the area.

The TAP also felt there is an opportunity to bring in economic development partners that are not currently working with the CRA, such as County and State economic development entities. These partnerships will bring access to potential businesses, capital, and civic investments. Mr. Stapleton recommended extending the life of the CRA through at least 2025 in order to provide certainty of an income stream and develop a greater marketing capacity.

The panel also considered phasing, and recommended stabilization of recent projects in which the CRA has invested in order to ensure that these projects are perceived as successful. They also recommended focusing on the intersection of Sistrunk Boulevard and NW 7th Avenue, as well as the nearby industrial district. Both cash and non-cash incentives are important, such as relaxed parking requirements or a more predictable approval process for projects. Mr. Stapleton emphasized the need for greater focus on small businesses.

In terms of development agreements, the TAP noted that past investments have not made a great impact on the surrounding community. They recommended strengthening agreements related to these investments so community benefits are clearer and more certain; in addition, private entities that partner with the CRA should have both incentives to perform and disincentives for nonperformance.

Mr. Stapleton summarized next steps for the Sistrunk Corridor as follows:

- Emphasize the Sistrunk Boulevard/NW 7th Avenue intersection as a gateway;
- Connect the Corridor to the industrial district and Avenue of the Arts;
- Stabilize past projects;
- Recruit economic development partners;
- Complete market research;
- Communicate the shared vision for the corridor;
- Hold a capital summit;
- Create of a Small Business Council;
- Ensure that the area's growing prosperity is shared by existing residents.

The Board members discussed the presentation, with Chair Lucas noting that it will be shown to the City Commission in two weeks. Mr. Stapleton recommended using an outside facilitator that has looked at similar situations nationwide and is very knowledgeable about urban transformation and market response. Mr. Wojcik confirmed that the Mosaic Group, which has contracted with the CRA, can provide more clarification and focus of market research for the Sistrunk Corridor.

Mr. Stapleton advised that a wide range of incentives are available for the corridor; the Board must consider them within the CRA's legal structure. He emphasized the need for

market research to determine what the marketplace will support, as well as the best incentives to bridge the gap to this support. Ms. Coleman added that developers want to know that a community has a vision of where it is going before they make investments, and do not want to be held up by a lengthy approval process. Mr. Wilkes advised that the City's Code also needs to be made more definitive, as time is critical for developers.

Mr. Stapleton concluded that some panelists were very excited about the industrial district, as they saw its potential for emerging entertainment uses and additional kinds of small businesses. He pointed out that this area was very active after dark, and concluded that it deserves further study to determine the opportunities it may offer.

Motion made by Mr. Wilkes, seconded by Ms. Burrows, to support the recommendations as presented. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

At this time Deputy Director of the Department of Sustainable Development Jeremy Earle introduced himself to the Board. Mr. Earle will oversee the City's CRAs. With regard to the ULI TAP Report, he advised that Broward County is not likely to approve the renewal of the CRA past 2025, although the City may do so; this would mean the CRA would continue to receive funding from the City, if not from the County.

IV. Funding Request – Ambassador Program

Mr. Battle recalled that the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) had recently provided an overview of its Ambassador Program, including elements of the program, service areas, and levels of service. The Flagler Village Improvement Association and Flagler Village Civic Association have requested that the CRA use its \$250,000 line item in the budget to pay for the implementation of this program within the Flagler Village area. Staff has prepared a contract reimbursement agreement for this request. Once the DDA and its service provider have reached the end of their pilot program contract, the DDA may be able to solicit other vendors or negotiate pricing, which could allow for an expanded service area, including the balance of the CRA district.

Mr. Battle concluded that if endorsed, this Item will go to the CRA Board at its next meeting. It was clarified that this contract is not with the vendor, but with the DDA: the CRA would be making a contribution directly to the DDA, as it does not have a relationship with the vendor.

Chris Wren, Executive Director of the DDA, advised that the Ambassador Program began roughly eight months ago as a pilot program, and covers the Riverwalk, Las Olas, and Himmarshee areas. The DDA engaged in a contract with the vendor after learning of a similar program in West Palm Beach. Because the DDA was comfortable with the bidding process used in West Palm Beach, it were allowed by State Charter to enter directly into a pilot program with the vendor. The DDA hopes to launch a similar pilot program in the Flagler Village area.

Mr. Wren continued that he does not wish to fully copy the original pilot program in Flagler Village, as the dynamics in this area are different. He anticipated having a member of DDA Staff or a participant in the Ambassador Program present at all Board meetings to update the members on activities in Flagler Village each month, or provide regular reports to be shared at meetings.

Mr. Strawbridge requested clarification of the proposed contract, expressing concern that the proposed pilot program would not use a competitive bidding process. Mr. Wren characterized the request as providing the DDA with a grant. Mr. Battle clarified that this has been done before with a pilot program, and that after the initial year of the program, there would be a requirement to go out to bid.

Chair Lucas requested more information on the results of the Ambassador Program thus far. Mr. Wren explained that the vendor provides specific reports related to its area, including Police activity, "hot spots" for pedestrian activity, and similar information. The ambassadors have coordinated with Police to contribute to the solving of crimes in the area. He added that the DDA's Board has expressed its willingness to continue the program.

It was noted that a portion of Flagler Village lies outside the CRA and within the Downtown area. Mr. Wren replied that the DDA would not spend any of the \$250,000 requested from the CRA in that area. He noted that ambassadors in the current program would keep an eye on issues existing beyond the program's boundaries. While the program's ambassadors may drift throughout the CRA, its area of responsibility will be within the Flagler Village area.

Mr. Wilkes noted that while the term of the agreement between the DDA and CRA would be for one year, the DDA's agreement with the business community exists on a month-to-month basis. Mr. Wren stated that this was due to the nature of the pilot program. He advised that the program would seek to consolidate existing security operations in the fashion of a neighborhood watch. Other entities within Flagler Village, such as the Civic Association, are not expected to contribute to the Ambassador Program. The \$250,000 is anticipated to cover 288 hours per week or 41 hours per day to start, although Mr. Wren noted that the actual number of hours needed per day has yet to be determined.

It was also noted that much of the current Ambassador Program acts by answering questions and addressing needs within the Downtown area that would not necessarily be met by Police Officers. Mr. Wilkes asked if there is sufficient demand for services like these in Flagler Village. Mr. Wren noted that in some communities, similar programs have primarily focused on providing security rather than an ambassador presence. He plans to reach out to the Flagler Village community to determine needs and goals for this area. The DDA will be open to suggestions on how to best develop the program.

Ms. Burrows asked for clarification of where the \$250,000 would come from in the CRA's budget. It was confirmed that this contribution to the DDA would come from the line item allocated to the Flagler Village Civic Association.

Mr. Gabriel also addressed contractual and technical concerns, noting that the contract and accompanying documents did not include all the information he felt necessary: for example, a memo states that the contract is under review by the City Attorney's Office. The contract also states that the contribution would cover a one-year term, payable up-front, with any funds not used by the DDA by the end of the term to be returned to the City. He concluded that while he felt the program would be good for the CRA, the contract raised some concerns, including whether or not the DDA has authority to extend the program outside its jurisdictional boundaries.

Mr. Wren replied that by Charter, the DDA is not restricted to its boundaries if they can prove that activities outside these boundaries contribute to benefits within. Mr. Gabriel also asked if the CRA would be able to extend the proposed program beyond the subject area of Flagler Village if they wished. Mr. Wren stated that the DDA's general counsel would need to determine if this extension would also provide benefits within the boundaries of the DDA.

Mr. Gabriel asked if Staff has determined that \$250,000 is a reasonable level of payment for the services provided. Mr. Battle responded that this is believed to be the case, based on contracts with other entities such as the West Palm Beach DDA, although the CRA has not previously entered into a contract for a program of this nature. Mr. Wojcik added that at present the request is only asking the CRA to use the DDA as a vehicle by which services would be secured.

Motion made by Mr. Gabriel, seconded by Mr. Lagi, to approve the services up to \$250,000 to the DDA, subject to contract review and completion.

Mr. Wilkes stated that the documents presented did not provide adequate information regarding needs, reasonableness of fees, services to be provided, or clear terms. He pointed out that if there is a need for additional services in any area of the City, it is typical for residents of that area to seek to retain those services through a local entity, such as the Flagler Village Civic or Improvement Associations. He concluded that he could not support the request.

Mr. Strawbridge agreed, also citing the lack of specificity in the documentation. He also noted that while the \$250,000 is characterized as a reimbursement, the CRA would actually be providing the DDA with funds up front, which would be returned to the CRA if unused. He also expressed concern with what would happen "on the edges" of the subject area, such as moving transient or disruptive activity into nearby neighborhoods

where the program would not exist. He did not feel a no-bid contract for \$250,000 was appropriate without sufficient backup materials.

It was clarified that the contract term would exist for one year, which meant the expense would be divided between the current fiscal year and FY 2015-16.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed 7-2 (Mr. Strawbridge and Mr. Wilkes dissenting).

V. Lease Request from Broward County – Von D. Mizell Center

Mr. Battle advised that the City had received a proposal from the Broward County Minority Builders Coalition to lease and renovate the Von D. Mizell Center. He recalled that in the early 2000s, the City's Housing and Community Development division was the primary tenant of the building, along with a local day care center. There is no longer a City Staff presence in the facility. Mr. Battle advised that the proposal would lease the building from the City, as it is not owned by the CRA. According to the City Charter, the City Commission must pass a Resolution declaring its intent to lease the building; after 30 days, they must adopt a second Resolution to enter into the lease.

Brian Johnson, President and CEO of the Broward County Minority Builders Coalition, reviewed the organization's history with the City, which includes management of duplex and triplex properties as well as redevelopment of the Northwest Federated Woman's Club. They would like to make the Mizell Center into the epicenter of economic development for the area, including the following:

- Small business development
- Job training and placement
- Home rehabilitation and development
- Safe housing for senior citizens

The project before the Board has gone through multiple revisions in collaboration with City leadership and Staff, including the Department of Sustainable Development. The Coalition's strategy would include full use of the Mizell Center, not including the daycare center; the Coalition will help facilitate repairs of the building. He noted that the project's budget was developed with the assistance of an architect, and a general contractor was selected through a competitive procurement process. The Coalition hopes to begin the renovation process as soon as possible.

Mr. Battle clarified that the presentation is currently conceptual in nature, with no contract for lease approval at this point. The City Commission will pass a Resolution advertising their intent to lease the property, after which the terms of the lease may be shared with the Board. The renovation project would be paid for with tax increment funds (TIF). These monies would be used solely toward the renovation of the center.

Mr. Johnson continued that the proposed budget, which includes two phases at \$929,900, includes the portion of the building that would be leased by the Coalition. The budget is based on what the Coalition's architect and general contractor have seen thus far, as well as the City's assessment for repairs. He clarified that the Coalition is not requesting CRA funds for operations, which is why the proposal does not include an operating budget. Their plan is to use the building to revitalize the Sistrunk Corridor through economic development by bringing in 15 to 20 participants in the Coalition's business incubator program to be housed in the Center.

Mr. Wilkes observed that this plan would have difficulty meeting the City's Charter requirements, and recommended presenting the City Commission with an operational budget to show how the Coalition and other businesses could sustain themselves. Mr. Johnson replied that the Coalition is a long-standing organization with a plan to generate the necessary revenues.

Mr. Strawbridge noted that the \$929,900 construction budget includes two phases. Mr. Johnson explained that the Coalition plans to renovate the building, although some features will require total replacement, including the elevator and roof. Plans also include installation of a fire protection system throughout the building, xeriscaping of the exterior, and façade enhancement. The budget is presented in two phases based upon the availability of funding during the current and next fiscal years.

Mr. Strawbridge estimated the cost of renovations and replacement at approximately \$3.4 million, which is significantly higher than the Coalition's estimate. Mr. Johnson advised that the Coalition's estimate is based upon discussions with City Staff regarding the assessment the City has already made, as well as a visual assessment of the exterior of the building by the Coalition's architect. Because the renovation would involve more than 50% of the building, they are also discussing the impact that bringing all or part of the building up to Code would have on the budget.

Mr. Gabriel requested clarification of the lease structure. Mr. Johnson stated that the Coalition would like the lease to begin as soon as possible so they may begin the demolition process. The Coalition has selected a general contractor through a competitive bid process; its next step will be leasing the building so this contractor may begin the renovation. The request from the CRA would serve to fund the renovation process.

Mr. Battle described the City's lease process, explaining that the Commission must first pass a Resolution advertising its intent to lease the building, after which time any other prospective tenants may present their ideas for the Center. Mr. Johnson advised that the Coalition's business incubator program would place 15 to 20 businesses in the building as tenants, from which they would use rents as income to fund programming and operations. Space on the building's first two floors would be used by the Coalition

itself. Mr. Johnson noted that it is not yet clear how the tenancy of the daycare center will be handled. It is also possible that some office space will be occupied by City Staff.

Mr. Battle further clarified that the Board is not being asked to approve a lease at this time, but to approve the concept presented by the Coalition. A lease may not be provided to the Board for review until after the City Commission has passed a Resolution of intent to lease the building. The Coalition's lease would be for a minimal amount, such as \$1 per year. Today's presentation to the Board is made in recognition of the fact that CRA dollars are being requested.

Mr. Wilkes pointed out that the CRA has no jurisdiction to advise the City on what to do with its property. Mr. Battle explained that if the Board and the City Commission both approve the project, CRA funds may be used toward improvement of the building. Mr. Wilkes reiterated that this would be outside the scope of the CRA, and that the request should more appropriately be made of the Board at a later point in the City's approval process. Mr. Johnson requested that the Board consider the leveraged resources the Coalition could bring to the project, such as operational revenue generated for operations through its business incubator program. Mr. Wilkes concluded that providing the Board with information on this operational budget would be very helpful.

Mr. Battle concluded that the request was presented to the Board as an informational item at this time; as the City has not yet fully reviewed the Coalition's full budget, nor has a lease been negotiated, no action is requested of the Board. More information will be provided to the Board as the process continues.

VI. Communication to CRA Board

None.

VII. Old / New Business

Ms. Hansen requested information on attending Board meetings via phone. It was clarified that any member participating by phone would be unable to vote on items presented.

Chair Lucas asked if Code Enforcement has rules that apply to the upkeep of urban gardens. He pointed out that if not properly fenced and weeded, these gardens may easily become unkempt. Mr. Earle advised that he would reach out to Code Enforcement for additional information on rules for community gardens. Ms. Hansen expressed similar concern for the "Made in Broward" facility, which is in need of exterior maintenance.

Mr. Wilkes noted that some areas within the CRA are currently in development lack adequate parking, as Code may assume more future transit and pedestrian use than

what exists at present. He characterized this as a transition issue until projects such as the Wave streetcar are implemented, and agreed that this issue should be addressed, as some properties can become unsightly due to parking and upkeep issues.

Mr. Lagi asked if Staff has determined an appropriate “as of” date from which to begin monthly financial updates on projects and expenditures in the CRA budget. Mr. Earle replied that he would follow up on this as well.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]